

Message Text

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S/NM FOR AMB VANCE; AID/SER/INC FOR WAMPLER; DEA FOR EOI CUSACK

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TAGS: SNAR, MX

SUBJECT: FIELD TRIP REPORT: INSPECTION OF SPRAYED POPPY FIELDS

REF: MEXICO 2888

SUMMARY: DEA AND NAU PERSONNEL RECENTLY CONDUCTED ON-SITE INSPECTION OF SPRAYED FIELDS IN ZONE I TO DETERMINE EFFECTIVENESS OF SPRAYING AS REPORTS PERSISTED THAT LEVEL OF WILTING KILL WAS NOT ACCEPTABLE AS THE TIME SPAN ALLOWED INCISING AFTER THE SPRAYING OPERATIONS. TWO DISTINCT SITUATIONS WERE DISCOVERED WHICH INDICATED THAT INSUFFICIENT STRENGTH OF THE HERBICIDE MIXTURE WAS A PRIME FACTOR IN ONE AND CONTRIBUTED TO THE OTHER. THE RECOMMENDATION WAS MADE TO INCREASE THE STRENGTH TO 15 GALLONS OF HERBICIDE AS OPPOSED TO PREVIOUS 12-1/2 GALLONS. ON MARCH 2, SENIOR STAFF MEMBER HENESTROSA, WHO WAS PRIME MOVE IN ACCELERATED SPRAYING OPERATIONS IN ZONE I, ANNOUNCED TO SOLIS AND NAU PROGRAM OFFICER DURING MEETING IN AG HEAD-QUARTERS THAT 15 GALLON MIX OF AMINA 2-4-D PER MODEL 212 LOAD IS NOW STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE. END OF SUMMARY.

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1. AV. ADV. FOR CONDUCTED ON-SITE INSPECTION OF SPRAYED FIELDS ACCOMPANIED BY DEA AND AG AERO SERVICES PERSONNEL DURING PERIOD 22-26 FEBRUARY TO DETERMINE IF SPRAYING OPERATIONS WERE ATTAINING ACCEPTABLE LEVEL OF EFFECTIVENESS CONSIDERING PLANT AND WEATHER CONDITIONS. REPORTS HAD INDICATED THAT IN SOME CASES, THE FIELDS COULD STILL BE INCISED AS THE WILTING OR KILLING EFFECT WAS RETARDED OR INEFFECTIVE FOR UNKNOWN REASONS. PURPOSE OF THE INSPECTIONS WAS TO ARRIVE AT A CONCLUSION AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS TO ATTAIN AN ACCEPTED LEVEL OF EFFECTIVENESS.

2. THE FIRST FIELD INSPECTED WAS ONE WHICH HAD BEEN SPRAYED THE PREVIOUS DAY. AT THE TIME OF SPRAYING THE PILOT IDENTIFIED IT AS A MARIJUANA FIELD, ALTHOUGH PREVIOUS AERIAL INSPECTION HAD REVEALED IT TO BE A POPPY FIELD; A GROUND INSPECTION CLARIFIED THE SITUATION: THE FIELD HAD BEEN PLANTED IN FURROWS ON 30-INCH CENTERS. EVERY OTHER FURROW WAS PLANTED WITH MARIJUANA. THE ALTERNATIVE FURROWS WERE PLANTED WITH POPPY. THE MARIJUANA WAS APPROXIMATELY FOUR OR FIVE FEET TALL, WHILE THE POPPIES WERE STILL IN THE SEEDLING STAGE, FOUR OR FIVE INCHES TALL. THIS RESULTED IN THE POPPY PLANTS BEING SHIELDED BY THE MARIJUANA PLANTS AND NOT BEING VISIBLE FROM THE AIR. THE NIGHT FOLLOWING THE SPRAYING THE MARIJUANA WAS HARVESTED, EXPOSING THE SEEDLING POPPIES. THE MARIJUANA HAD SUFFICIENTLY PROTECTED THE POPPY AND A RESPRAYING OF THE FIELD WAS REQUIRED. (A SEARCH OF SURROUNDING BUILDINGS AND WOODS DID NOT REVEAL THE LOCATION OF THE HARVESTED MARIJUANA.)

3. OTHER FIELDS INSPECTED INDICATE THAT THE CHEMICAL MIXTURE PRESENTLY BEING USED (12-1/2 GAL. 2-4-D TO 300 CAL. WATER) WAS NOT SUFFICIENT STRENGTH TO GUARANTEE TOTAL ERADICATION OF POPPY PLANTS UNDER THE PRESENT PLANT AND WEATHER CONDITIONS. THIS IS SUPPORTED BY THE FACT THAT FIELDS WHICH HAD BEEN SPRAYED WITH OVERLAPPING SWATHS WERE DEAD AFTER THREE DAYS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WHILE THE PERIMETERS(WHICH RECEIVED ONLY ONE LAYER OF CHEMICAL) WERE ONLY PARTIALLY DAMAGED. BASED ON THESE FINDINGS A MIXTURE OF 15/20 GAL. OF 2-4-D TO 300 GAL. OF WATER SHOULD RESULT IN MORE ACCEPTABLE RESULTS.

4. OF THE THIRTY-FIVE FIELDS CHECKED, WHICH WERE IN THEIR THIRD TO SIXTH DAY FOLLOWING SPRAYING, APPROXI-

MATELY SEVENTY PER CENT WERE DEAD. THE REMAINING THIRTY PER CENT REPRESENTED FIELD PERIMTERS WHICH WERE ONLY PARTIALLY DAMAGED AND TWO FIELDS WHICH SHOWED LITTLE CHEMICAL DAMAGE.

5. THE PRESENT STRENGTH BEING USED, FOLLOWING INSPECTION TEAM'S RECOMMENDATIONS, CONSISTS OF 15 GALLONS OF HERBICIDE PER 212 LOAD. CONTINUOUS MONITORING OF SPRAYED FIELDS IS BEING CONDUCTED BY THE DEA REPRESENTATIVE IN ZONE I WHO ACCOMPANIED AV ADV FORD DURING THE ON-SITE INSPECTIONS.
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